

Through an intense storm of legal and political opposition, he opened up the pension records; putting an end forever to backroom special pension bills. He got our State Police nationally accredited.

He even cleaned up the Capitol literally!

All that was extraordinary—but still not enough.

In the worst economic times the state had seen since the Depression, with a shrinking budget, he decided to extend universal health care to children—and started the program that became Rite Care. Against immense opposition, he built our new airport terminal. He embarked on the Westin Hotel, the Convention Center, and the Providence Place Mall. He finished the Jamestown Bridge and built the Expressway. And even that's not the end of it.

It was an amazing burst of activity. I will bet that almost every Rhode Islander, almost every day, is somehow touched by something Governor Sundlun did.

And through it all, he drove his staff crazy. He was irrepressible, impatient, imperial, unscriptable, combative, frustrating, willful, constantly threw caution to the winds, impossible to keep up with—he drove us nuts.

And we loved him.

We loved him because he was bold and brave, and was warm-hearted and trusting and generous, and because he was willing to throw caution to the winds to do what was right. We loved him because he never once had us make excuses or try to shift the blame.

That was not his style. "Never complain; never explain."

We all remember his Bruce-isms:

"Always touch base with those concerned before taking action."

"How fast would you get it done if the Russians were in South Attleboro?"

"When you've won, stop talking, close your briefcase and leave."

"Message to Garcia."

"Who, what, where, when; don't bother me with why."

The phone calls, at all hours, that began with no "hello" and ended with dial tone.

The road shows known to his staff as "Dome on the Roam," or more precisely, "Bruce on the Loose."

And sometimes just that big foxy grin.

We saw that his qualities of friendship and loyalty had an almost physical force; that he had your back even if you made mistakes (no one ever was thrown under the bus); and that he was a better friend the more the chips were down.

Politics is full of fair weather friends; Bruce Sundlun was your stormy weather friend. Politics is full of people who take tiny cautious steps with their finger up constantly testing the winds; Bruce stepped boldly down the path he thought was right, even if that meant stepping right in it.

People wonder what lives on after they die. Well, Bruce, we do. And every one of us has been changed: made better, and stronger, harder-working and more resourceful, by your vibrant elemental force in our lives.

We've gone on to be judges and lawyers, to run state and federal agencies, to become Senators and councilmen and Lieutenant Governors, banking leaders and senior partners in national accounting firms, but none of us ever will be more proud of anything than the simple title: "I was a Sundlun staffer."

Soozie and Marjorie, Tracey and Stuart and Peter and Kara: Thank you. Thank you for sharing your husband and father with our state. For those who loved and were changed by him, I thank you. For those who knew and were touched by him, I thank you. And for those who never knew him directly, but whose lives are better today because of what he did, I thank you.

As I close, I want to take you back to a scene from that wonderful movie I saw as a kid, "To Kill A Mockingbird." As you'll recall, Atticus Finch takes on the courageous but unpopular defense of a black man wrongfully accused of rape. At the end of the trial, Atticus's daughter Scout—proper name Jean Louise—is up in the gallery of the courtroom, with the black townspeople, who aren't allowed down on the regular courtroom floor. The courtroom floor empties, but they remain, and slowly stand. As Atticus packs his papers together, closes his bag, and walks out, an elderly man leans down to the little girl and says, "Stand up, Miss Jean Louise. Your father's passing."

At the end of this service, as Bruce is taken to his gravesite after 91 years of a life well and fully lived, we will all stand up. And rightly so. A governor will be passing.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, there are currently two bills headed for a vote to raise the debt ceiling and to reduce spending. One of those two bills from the House, Speaker BOEHNER's, cuts about \$1 trillion in spending and raises the debt ceiling by \$1 trillion until the end of the year, approximately. That is about how long it would take to run up another \$1 trillion in debt. The other bill from Senate Majority Leader REID cuts about \$1 trillion and raises the debt ceiling about \$3 trillion—or past the 2012 election. This is because the President said emphatically just a few days ago at a press conference:

The only bottom line I have is that we have to extend this debt ceiling through the next election, into 2013.

So it is really quite simple. Speaker BOEHNER's bill lives up to the principle that I thought we had all agreed to: that every \$1 in debt ceiling increase should be tied to a \$1 reduction in spending. The spenders get an advantage since the spending reductions occur over 10 years, whereas the debt ceiling would increase immediately. But that is the principle on which we have been operating.

Senator REID's bill is a hoax. It uses Washington gimmicks designed to make it look three times as large as it is. In reality, it hikes the debt ceiling \$3 for every \$1 in spending cuts over 10 years. The House bill is 1 to 1, the Senate bill is 3 to 1. We have demonstrated this exhaustively in a Budget Committee analysis that I don't think people would dispute. And the House approach—one of the primary ways this is accomplished is to count the reduc-

tion in spending over the war in Iraq and Afghanistan that is projected to occur and has already been projected to occur and count that as a spending cut. Speaker BOEHNER didn't do that. His would look \$1 trillion better also if he used those numbers.

The House approach is honest, it is straightforward, and it achieves \$1 in cuts for every \$1 in debt ceiling increase. It allows us to return to the table in a few months to assess our progress, see what is happening in the economy, and begin working toward the greater cuts that are needed.

Senator REID's bill relies on accounting tricks, takes the debt limit off the table until after the election, and exchanges a record \$3 trillion in debt hike for only one-third as much in debt cuts.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle signed a letter vowing to defeat the Boehner plan. I find this a little shocking, frankly, and surprising. Is it the position of the Senate Democratic majority that \$1 trillion in cuts over 10 years is all we need to achieve between now and 2013? Is it their view that \$1 in cuts for every \$1 in debt limit increase is too steep or is it a political effort to protect the President by pushing the debt limit ceiling past the next election, creating the highest increase in debt ceiling, I think, in history, except for perhaps the one that the super Democratic majority in the Senate slipped through during the passage of the health care bill? Is it this election issue that Democrats would turn down an agreement on and put us at risk of financial disruption of our economy?

So let's step back for a moment and look at the wider context. Washington is often consumed by political fights and blame games. It can be hard to differentiate between facts and talking points. But I would like to provide as honest an assessment as I can as to why we find ourselves in this unfortunate situation at the eleventh hour.

We have a process, a statutory and legal process to arrive at a budget deal every single year. It is written into the law of the United States. The President is required to submit a budget, by law, each year, and each Chamber is required to pass one separately and then agree on one together.

If the year had begun with a serious budget proposal from the President, we wouldn't be in this mess today. But he submitted a budget that would double our debt in 10 years, while he claimed it would not add to the debt and he claimed it would cause us to live within our means. Indeed, he had a substantial tax increase, very real tax increases of significant amounts, but his spending increased even more than that. So the net total of the President's budget was to make the debt trajectory we are on not better but worse, even with the tax increase. Indeed, his budget next year that he submitted proposed increases for the Education Department, the Energy Department, the State Department, and the

Transportation Department—those double-digit increases at a time when we are running the biggest deficit the Nation has ever sustained.

Senate Democrats have refused to pass, meanwhile, in this body—pass or bring up a budget for 820 days, 2 years. The majority leader said it would be foolish to pass a budget. Foolish to not pass a budget?

So these are facts. Our colleagues who run the Senate here have defied the law and sound policy all year long, and now we are paying the price—a last-minute, take-it-or-leave-it, panic vote. Nobody yet knows what is going to be in the legislation finally because of the rejection of any bill that seems to be out there at this time.

If the White House or Senate Democrats had taken the budget process seriously last year and if they had presented a single credible plan to cut spending, we wouldn't be here at this eleventh hour. Indeed, our Democratic colleagues have insisted on secret meetings that shielded them from making any of their budget plans public, that shielded them from any real votes on spending and debt, and it appears those meetings have failed.

Democrats have campaigned and sought control and a majority in the Senate, and they chose, in this time of fiscal crisis, not to engage in the budget process in a serious way. In fact, they are apparently so determined to avoid the public budget process that the Reid bill even includes language designed to circumvent the process for 2 more years.

So you will forgive me if I am a little concerned by all these attacks on the tea party. They didn't start this fire; they sounded the alarm. Before the last election, when Democrats controlled both Chambers of Congress by substantial majorities, every conversation was about increasing spending, more, more, more. Congress passed a stimulus bill—the largest single onetime expenditure ever passed by any Congress or any nation in history, every penny of that borrowed. We were already hugely in debt. We are now borrowing 40 cents of every dollar. It passed. The Congress also passed the President's massive new health care entitlement. It passed the President's request for extraordinary increases in discretionary spending. Nondefense discretionary spending has gone up 24 percent at a time of record deficits in the last 2 years. We have added \$4 trillion to our gross debt since the President took office. Just in the time since the Senate Democrats last passed a budget, we have spent more than \$7 trillion without a budget. These are the facts.

But after the 2010 election and the emergence of the tea party and commonsense American people who knew better about what is going on in Washington, we have finally begun to look at Washington's spending problems. Now, instead of just raising the debt ceiling with no spending cuts, as the White House initially and repeatedly

demand, we are talking about how to cut some spending.

People in the tea party and those who share their concerns should not be the ones vilified. They are good, decent, patriotic Americans whose only crime is rightly fearing for the future of their Nation. Are they wrong to be concerned when this Congress spends money willy-nilly every day, 40 cents of it borrowed? They know this is not right, and that is the kind of message they have sent to us. We need to listen to the heart of America speaking.

The last point I would like to make is about the issue of compromise. There have been suggestions that the Republicans have simply been unwilling to budge from their position. But the Boehner proposal represents only a small portion of the cuts the Republicans have advocated and that they believe should be achieved. This is truly a critical point and one the White House will not acknowledge. The House budget that they passed, a long-term 10-year budget that would change the debt trajectory of America and put us on a sound financial course in a responsible way, cuts \$6 trillion in comparison to the President's request. The Toomey budget the Senate voted on cuts about \$8 trillion. The House passed a plan, which I cosponsored, that not only cuts and caps spending but that requires the passage of a constitutional balanced budget amendment. In fact, all 47 Republican Senators have cosponsored a constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

The \$1 trillion in cuts Speaker BOEHNER is asking for would be, indeed, a modest first step, an effort to compromise and reach a number that had a realistic chance of passing this body. But under his plan we will return to the table after that \$1 trillion increase in the debt ceiling has been used. This is far from the level of savings I wish to see, or the Republican House wishes to see. One trillion dollars is a bitter pill for a lot of those Members who know it is not enough. The economists and others and bondholders are telling us we need at least \$4 trillion. That just reduces the crisis nature we are in. That would not come close to putting us on a path to a balanced budget over 10 years. Reducing deficits by \$4 trillion over 10 years when our deficits are going to increase by \$9 trillion to \$13 trillion over 10 years obviously does not solve our debt crisis. But \$1 trillion is even much smaller. That was a figure that was believed that this Senate might accept, so the House Members, in order to avoid a debt crisis and a financial crisis over the debt ceiling, are apparently working hard and maybe they will send it over here, I don't know. They are working hard to try to do that. I think that is a reasonable compromise and a fair approach to this Congress.

We are going to spend around \$45 trillion over the next 10 years. That will add as much as \$13 trillion to the gross

debt. It is clear we have a lot more work to do. We are going to be fighting for cuts in spending bills, omnibus bills, continuing resolutions, and in every other place we can to impose fiscal discipline on this country. We must control spending. We must control and conquer the debt.

The President said he wants a balanced approach to the deficit—a balanced approach. But a balance is not a tax hike that bails out the big spenders who surged our spending with stimulus bills and surging 24-percent increases in discretionary spending. He is going to bail them out by raising taxes. We should never have run up that kind of spending. But balance is not a tax hike of that kind. Creating real balance, the right balance, means shifting power away from Washington, placing it in the safe hands of the American people. That is what the voters said last year when they gave a shellacking to the big spenders and that is what we should do now, and that is what I will be working for and I believe a lot of other people in the Congress on both sides of the aisle will be working for.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. McCASKILL). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIORITIZING DEBT

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, last January—probably late in the month I think it was—it occurred to me that as we proceeded in the direction of approaching the statutory limit of our borrowing as a government, the discussion was becoming a little bit counterproductive in some respects. One, in particular, was this constant threat we would default on the loans we had taken out as a government, the bonds that were held by millions of Americans, and that a default would have cataclysmic repercussions. It occurred to me that this is an unproductive discussion, in part, because no such default was ever going to happen. Certainly, it didn't need to happen. In the event we didn't raise the debt limit upon reaching it or prior to that, we would have enough ongoing tax revenue to cover the debt service by many multiples.

So I introduced legislation that would clarify this. It would take this risk off the table and try to provide some clarity to markets and to senior citizens who are savers and who have invested their savings in Treasuries and to have a constructive and honest debate about what the implications are of reaching the debt limit without raising it. So I introduced a bill that would instruct the Treasury Secretary to prioritize debt service in the event we